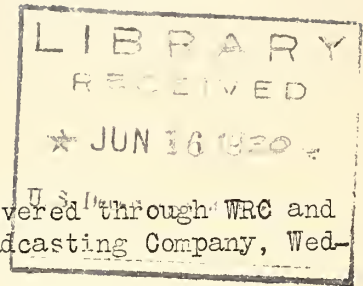


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MAY WEATHER AND CROPS



A radio talk by J. B. Kincer, Weather Bureau, delivered ^{U.S. 164} through WRC and 34 other radio stations associated with the National Broadcasting Company, Wednesday, June 4, 1930.

How do you do, friends: In passing, as it were, we have dropped in for a word of greeting, and being a Weather Man, your first question naturally will be "How's the weather?" Now, that's just why we are with you today for our usual monthly weather chat. Most of us, perhaps, have an idea occasionally that it would be just splendid if we could regulate the weather to suit ourselves - order rain or sunshine, or warm - just as needed, but then who would want the job of ordering? The particular brand of weather that would suit some folks wouldn't suit others at all, and I fear it wouldn't be long until the job of ordering weather would go a begging. I suppose it is just as well as it is, we have to take the weather as it comes, but once here, we can talk about it to our heart's content.

Now, what about the weather of May? In some respects it was different from May of last year and in others rather similar. Last May, you may remember, was cool rather generally east of the Rocky Mountains, and excessively wet in central valley sections. This year, the first two weeks of the month were abnormally warm over the eastern half of the country, and mostly cool over the western half, and thereafter there was a marked persistent coolness, with some very low temperatures for the season in most Central and Eastern States.

Naturally the next question is - "What effect did May weather have on growing crops in different parts of the country?" Well, as usual, there were some favorable and some unfavorable features. So far as farm work is concerned, conditions, on the whole, were decidedly better than last year, especially as regards the planting of spring crops in the interior valleys. During the second week of the month there were very heavy and damaging rains that washed fields badly, and flooded lowlands over a large area comprising the lower Mississippi Valley and some adjacent sections, but in much of the central valleys, where heavy rains last May prevented spring seeding and other field work, this May was dry, which permitted planting to keep abreast of the season and in many places even ahead of an average year. However, in most sections of the country, temperatures during the last half of May were decidedly too low for good germination and growth of warm-weather crops, but grass and small grains did well, wherever it was not too dry. Frosts and freezing temperatures occurred in many northern States and, in the East, extended as far south as extreme southwestern Virginia on two or three different occasions, more or less harm resulted to tender vegetation in these areas. There was considerable local damage to fruit crops, especially to cherries in parts of the Lake region, but in general fruits were not extensively harmed; young truck suffered in a good many sections.

The weather was fairly favorable for winter wheat, especially in the western and northwestern portions of the main producing area, though moisture has been insufficient in much of the eastern belt, especially in the southern and eastern Ohio Valley sections. In the Southwest, where previous drought was severe, with the coming of the rains, wheat and other grains showed improvement,

but they did not respond as fully as many had hoped, and complaints are rather widespread of thin stands and short straw. In the northwestern portion of the belt conditions continued generally favorable, while rains during the last few days have been helpful to the wheat crop in the Pacific Northwest. The season, so far, has been rather favorable for spring wheat. Recent growth has been slow, and there was more or less damage during the past week by high winds drifting the soil in the northern portion of the belt, but the weather has been mostly favorable for germination, with resulting good stands and color. Reserve soil moisture, however, is rather scanty in the spring wheat area, which would cause harm, even with a moderate drought.

Corn planting was accomplished this year in good season, which is in marked contrast to last year in many central valley sections. In fact seeding was completed earlier than usual in many places. However, weather conditions were much more favorable for field work than for germinating seed, which was slow and irregular because of coolness, and in much of the eastern belt because of dryness. This made stands irregular in many places, with considerable re-planting necessary, and some is still to do. Growth of corn has been slow, but fields are mostly clean, and cultivation is active. Early fields are being cultivated as far north as South Dakota, and some are being gone over the second time in Iowa. Corn needs continued warmth and more moisture.

During the second week of May, frequent and heavy rains were unfavorable in the western Cotton Belt, including the lower Mississippi Valley, with fields badly washed and lowlands flooded, the latter part of the month was favorably fair in those areas, and field work has been actively resumed. Recent coolness, however, has caused slow growth rather generally over the belt, and there are many complaints of droughty conditions in eastern portions. Continued warm weather is needed in all of the Cotton States, with a good general warm rain east of the Mississippi Valley. Now, friends, this is all the weather we have for this time, so with best wishes for June, we must now say so long, until the first Wednesday in July.

